

ure of the fullness of Christ." Brethren, all our future success depends upon the position and condition of the church.

If we believe in our hearts that the church is God's, that she belongs to Christ, and she is the fairest and sweetest and best among ten thousand, then will we begin to extol and magnify her excellency. "Thy will be done on earth," "Thy kingdom come."

All depends upon the quickness of the time, as to whether the church shall now fulfil her God-given mission.

Her mission *will* be accomplished, "the gate of hell shall not prevail against her." But the church can hasten the time, by making herself ready, "Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God," or rather hastening the coming. See marginal reading II Pet. 3: 12.

The new convert is but a child in Christ. The purpose is that the *child* shall grow up to be a *man* in Christ, full-grown, and as the child grows in days and years he may grow in manly things and put away the childish things.

The young convert *has been* taught, but he has yet much to learn, and therefore one of the essentials for the church to do is to see that he or she is taught God's holy and divine Word. This is *imperative*. It is not left optional with us. If we are true servants of God we will see that the Word is correctly taught.

Then again these new recruits must also be taught *to do battle* for Christ. They can not fight his battles and handle his sword without drill, without practice. A man in order to become a learned and skillful carpenter must saw boards and shove a plane, etc. The physician too, must be taught by dissecting a dead, and otherwise worthless body, before he is permitted to practice his profession upon a living person, and so it is with all trades.

As soon as the new convert knows how to do the least duty and labor in the church he must be *put to work*. There are always so many duties and labors to be done in the church of Jesus Christ, that all from the least to the greatest can find something to do, and ought to be put to work.

The proper persons in the church, the teachers should see that the work is well done, corrections made if necessary, and new lessons given and taught, and then as the new convert acquires new and higher abilities, he is set at work in higher and more difficult duties.

Proper care should be taken to always give the right encouragement to all who may be weak or make a mistake.

The church must give all her members something to do, from the new convert to

the oldest in the congregation. And the new convert is in some way to be fitted for the duties of an older member of the church. Idleness is one of the church's greatest and most destructive enemies. Our final safety depends upon *knowing* and doing God's will.

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HOW TO RETAIN THE YOUNG CONVERT.

The tact and wisdom of the church has never a greater demand made upon it than when, after a successful revival has closed, it is called upon to find a place and a work for each new convert. While depth of conviction and thoroughness of conversion may ordinarily be relied upon to assure permanency of discipleship, yet there are thousands hopefully converted who afterward make total shipwreck of faith. They lose their first love, their zeal grows cold and they drop out of the ranks not because of any radical change of belief, nor because of any insurmountable difficulty in pursuing their christian course, but simply because of neglect. The neglect is perhaps largely on their own part—they fail to avail themselves of the opportunities for spiritual growth which are afforded them—but too many times, it is to be feared, there is culpable neglect on the part of the church as well. If the church would retain the new convert within the fold—not only hold him nominally but would keep his loyalty fresh and his love warm—she must furnish him more than a place for his name upon her rolls. "Come thou with us and we will do thee good," was the invitation and promise of the church to the unconverted sinner when he stood outside the door. Now that he has responded to the invitation of the Spirit and the Bride, the promise of the church must be kept. The duty of the church is not ended nor its work done till it has exhausted every means and effort to preserve without spot and blemish those that God has called into his fold.

Jesus called Lazarus to life, but to the disciples he said, "Loose him—from the entangling grave clothes—and let him go," and the church to-day has a somewhat similar duty to perform toward each new convert. The soul newly brought by the power of God from death unto life needs human as well as divine help and encouragement. This unfolding spirituality must be given direction and purpose, not only to the end that he may thus become more useful to the church and the world, but that he himself may retain the life he has so lately found, that his love may not grow cold nor his vows be forgotten nor dishonored.

That there is a liability for the young

convert to lose something of his first courage and hopefulness when the rush and glow of his early fervor has been somewhat tempered by time, is unfortunately true. There are corroding and corrupting influences which operate in the kingdom of grace just as there are such influences in the kingdom of nature. That certain metals will rust and be destroyed when exposed to the weather unless they are kept bright by constant use, is no more true than that our moral goodness will decline and our nature become corrupted by the all-pervading corrosion of sin unless we keep our souls pure by the constant cultivation of a devotional spirit. If the new convert is to be preserved from sin's corrosion, he must be given *work*. If the current of his spiritual life is to be kept fresh and pure there must be constant activity.

The law of life is motion; the law of spiritual life is growth. The newly converted soul, glowing with love to God and for the cause of religion, wants to *do* something, to develop its powers to grow. Little danger of his becoming a "backslider" if a suitable and congenial field for the exercise of his spiritual activities be provided for him. But how can all be kept employed and what special work can be allotted to each? To find a proper answer to these questions is not the least of the pastor's perplexities. Sometimes a grievous mistake is made by assigning to a new convert a work which should be demanded only of mature Christians. It is not wise either to insist that each convert *must* begin at once to make public prayers or speak in the prayer meeting. Kindly encourage all to do so, but remember that when you censure those who do not, you may be defeating the very end you have in view. The S. S. C. E. will furnish a field for the activity of some, the K. C. for others, the prayer meeting and the Sunday-school for all, and if in addition to all this the pastor sees a necessity for it, let him appoint special committees for various purposes, and let him give a place on these committees to any who may seem to be growing luke-warm and to those whose interest in the church seems to be growing less on account of their taking no part in its work. In a word, give the new convert work suited to his attainments and natural endowments; make him feel that he is an integral and necessary part of the body, and you will have greatly increased the probability that he will hold out faithful.

If the convert can be made to feel that he has not simply "joined" the church, that he is not merely an adherent to the church, but that he is *in* the church, a